

Leveling the Field

MDCPS Policies and Procedures

Tonya Rogillio, L.S.W., M.S.W.

Objectives

- Attendees will increase knowledge of MDCPS policies and procedures.
- Attendees will have a better understanding of how MDCPS policies drive practice.
- Attendees will be better positioned to represent parents involved in the child welfare system in order to pursue better outcomes for families and children.
- DISCLAIMER!



- Legal Basis for Authority
 - State laws
 - Federal laws
 - Best Practices
 - Olivia Y ModifiedSettlement Agreement



TODAY

- Investigations (08-19-21)
- Foster Care (12-13-21)
- Foster Home Licensure (01-27-20)

Reports of Maltreatment

YOU ARE A MANDATED REPORTER!

How do you make a report?

- Hotline-1-800-222-8000
- App for iPhone and Android
- Internet

Investigations and Assessments



Level I, II, or III?



What happens prior to initiation?



Who gets notified?

Required Interviews Reporter

All named victims

All other household children

Parent/guardian/custodian/caretaker

All other household members

Alleged perpetrator

Collateral contacts

Multidisciplinary
Team
Investigations

If the allegations meet the MDT protocol for referral to a Children's Advocacy Center, a referral should be made as soon as possible.

Photographs

Photographs of the child and the child's home or location where the child was residing when the abuse or neglect occurred are required in order to document any physical evidence of abuse or neglect.

Medical Examinations

- Allegations of injuries
- All allegations of sexual abuse (follow MDT protocol)
- Using the SAFE Center clinics is preferred and is written into many county's MDT protocol.

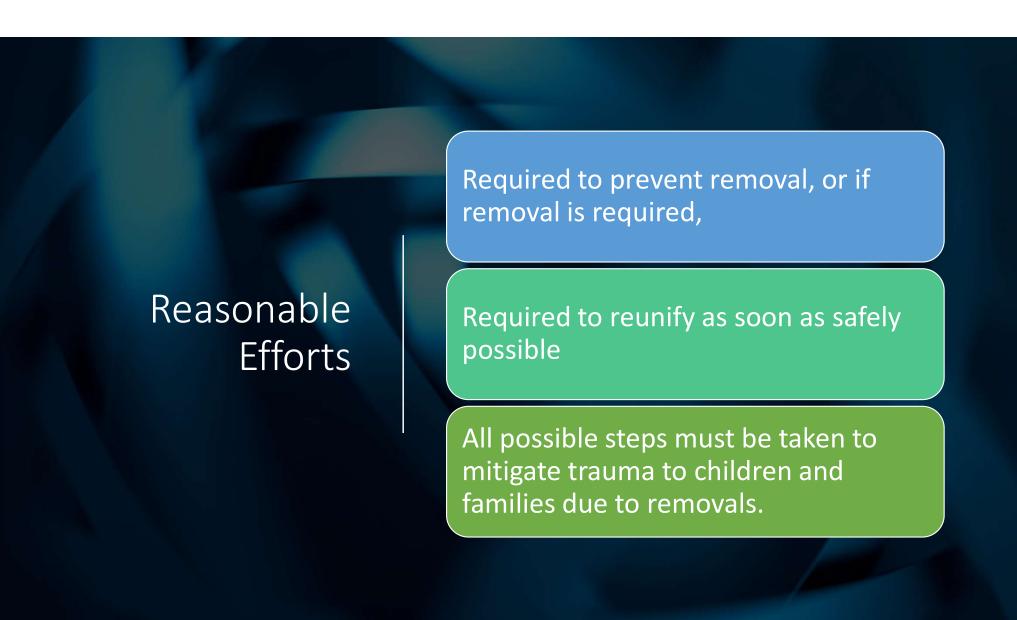
 Begins at first contact Documentation is required within first 7 days Safety Required on all Level II and Assessment Level III investigations Risk assessment is completed simultaneously with the Safety Assessment

Findings

- Home Assessment
- Safety Assessment
- Risk Assessment
- Interviews/information gathering
- Direct Observation
- Medical/psychological information
- Credible victim/witness statement
- Admission by perpetrator
- Photographs

Types of Findings

- Substantiated
- Unsubstantiated
- Closed without findings



Safety Planning

A Safety Plan is an agreement between the parent/caregiver and the worker, with supervisory approval. Once agreed upon and signed, a Safety Plan cannot be changed or amended without further discussion and consent of the parent/caregiver, unless ordered by the Court.

MDCPS must notify the court of any Safety Plan prior to implementation.

Should be developed in conjunction with a Family Team Meeting and is part of Reasonable Efforts to maintain children with families.

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1. Which one is the lie?

A. All household members must be interviewed as part of the investigation

B. Investigation findings should be based on a worker's gut instincts

C. All investigations that meet criteria must be referred to the appropriate county MDT

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Foster Care

A child becomes a foster child when the county or MDCPS receives custody of the child. This is accomplished through the following means: Court Orders, Parental Request/Voluntary Placement, "Safe Babies" and Child In Need of Supervision (CHINS).

If custody is required:

- The worker must document in the case file and provide information to the Judge which supports the following:
 - Circumstances in the home which presented a substantial risk of harm to the child.
 - Efforts made by the worker to prevent placement;
 - Specific services and supports provided to the family, and
 - Why such efforts failed to prevent the child's removal.



Placement

Screening is required in order to identify best possible placement, that screening must be:

- Individualized
- Strengths based
- Family focused
- Culturally responsive
- Family inclusive

Considerations

- Under no circumstances, even emergencies, shall foster children be taken to the home of an MDCPS employee.
- No child shall spend more than 12 hours at a time in an MDCPS office
- Placement must be least restrictive and most family like possible.
- In order of preference, placement should be with:
 - Siblings
 - Relatives or tribal members
 - Resource family home
 - Group home
 - Institutional care

General guidelines for placement in a foster home

- No foster child should be placed in a home prior to MDCPS receipt of the background check results.
- No more than 3 foster children, or for a total of 5 children (including foster, bio, and adopted) at any given time in a foster home.
- No more than two children under two or who have therapeutic needs.
- A sibling group in excess of these limits can be placed together in a foster/resource home but only upon written approval determining than the foster children can be maintained safely in the foster home.

Placement procedure

- Foster Child Information Form should be provided to the caregiver
- The following documentation will be completed during placement process and be filed in the case file/record:
 - Court Order
 - Family Resources for Children form
 - Child Medical Record
 - Birth Certificate or application
 - Family Service Plans
 - Court Reports
 - Requests for funds
 - IV-E Eligibility application/paperwork



Placement Disruption

A Family Team Meeting for the purpose of preventing a placement disruption shall be convened upon receipt of any information that a placement may disrupt to discuss:

- The cause of the potential disruption
- Is the Placement the most appropriate?
- Are additional services necessary?
- Should the child be moved?
- If so, to where?

Notifications that a child will be removed.

Case Planning

•FTM>CFA>FSP

The FSP should be used as a means of facilitating the children's return home to the parent/caregiver.

Family Service Plans

Should be:

- Individualized
- Strengths based
- Family focused
- Culturally responsive
- Approved by ASWS
- Filed with the Court and in the case record
- Copy provided to parent/caregiver

Contacts While in Foster Care

Twice a month, face to face between worker and child with at least one being in the placement setting.

Twice a month between child and parents unless there is a no contact order.

Monthly between siblings not placed together.

Visits with other relatives is at the discretion of the worker

Setting and Supervision

Visits should occur in the safest and least restrictive setting.

If visits are supervised in an office setting for safety reasons, as safety issues are resolved and the protective capacities are strengthened, visitations should transition to unsupervised home or other location and/or combination.

Exceptions to visits

When a court order forbids visitation

When a Psychiatrist or Psychologist or other mental health professional recommends that visitation would be physically or emotionally damaging to the child. (This must be documented in a written report to the Court)



Medical care

Mental health care

Dental Care

Education

Services to Resource Parents

- Monthly face to face in the home contact is required in order to:
 - Share all relevant information concerning the child
 - Evaluate the child's safety, needs, and well being
 - Monitor service delivery and achievement of service and permanency plan goals.
 - Environmental check to view sleeping arrangement, home condition, etc.

Permanent and Concurrent Planning

- Every child in foster care will have a Permanent Plan and a Concurrent plan.
- Permanency planning is ongoing
- Permanency planning is a systematic process of carrying out a set of plans and goal directed activities within a time limited period as defined in MISS CODE ANN. 43-15-13 and the Adoption and Safe Families Act(ASFA) of 1997 (P.L. 105-89)

Permanency Planning

- The following must be taken into account when determining the most appropriate permanency plan for a child:
 - The likelihood of reunification
 - The past history of the family
 - Barriers to reunification being addressed by the family
 - The level of cooperation of the family
 - The Resource family's willingness to work with the family toward reunification
 - The willingness of the placement resource to provide a permanent home in the event that reunification is unsuccessful
 - The age of the child
 - The placement of siblings

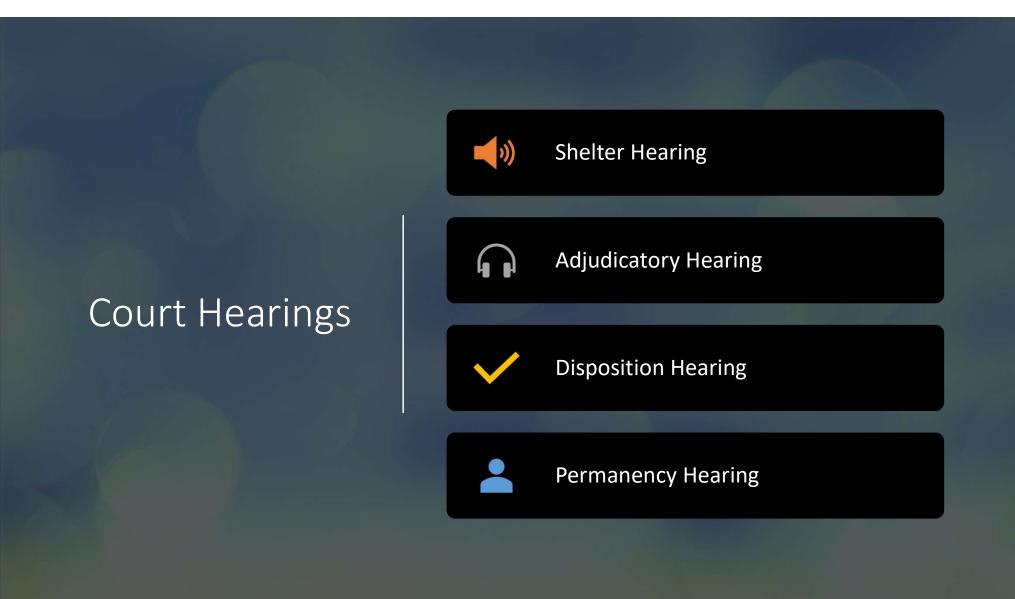


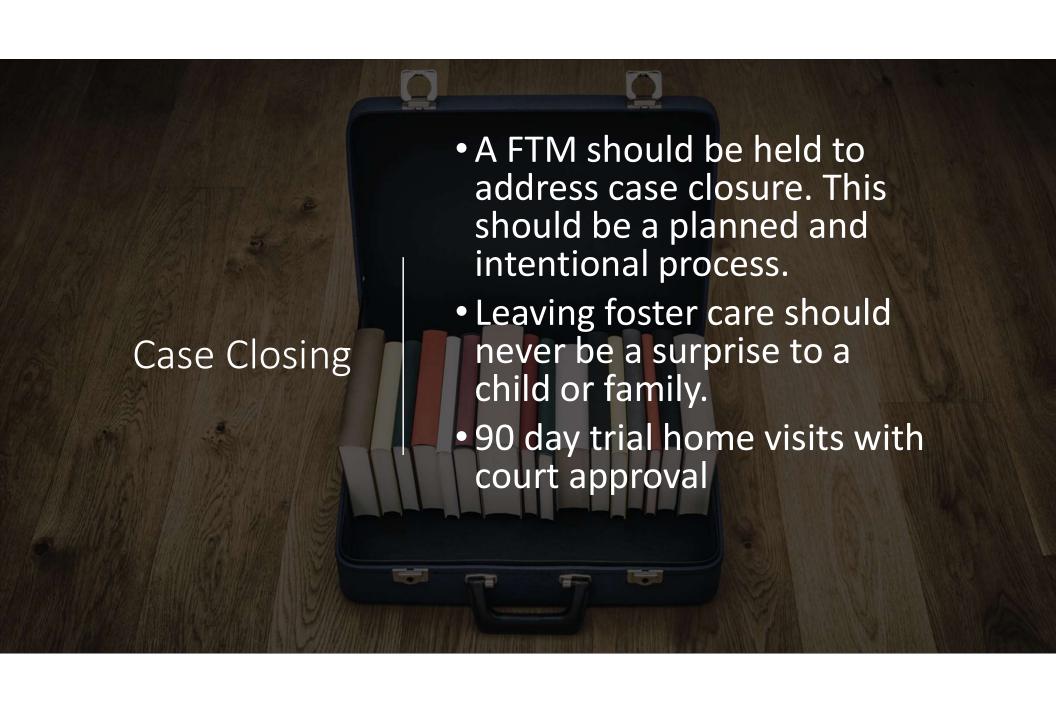
Reviews

Supervisory Administrative Review

Special Permanency Review

Foster Care Review





Planning for Youth to age out at 18

If a Youth leaves custody after attaining the age of eighteen, the following criteria shall be met:

- Youth has a safe place to live
- Youth has a means of support
- Youth has been notified, in writing, at least thirty calendar days in advance that emancipation will be sought
- Youth has a mentor and/or a Resource Family to provide ongoing support.

Custody Beyond Age Twenty

- Youth Court jurisdiction terminates when a child reaches age twenty or sooner if determined by the Youth Court.
- The CPS worker may, if determined to be necessary, petition the Chancery Court for continued custody until the child reaches age twenty-one.
- The petition must be filed prior to the child's twentieth birthday.

Personal
Documents
to be given to
the child at
discharge

- Birth certificate
- Social Security Card
- ID or Driver's License
- Any death certificates
- Immigration, citizenship, or naturalization paperwork
- Medicaid card
- Educational records
- Immunization Records



- Religious documents or information
- List of known relatives
- Previous placement information
- Passport
- Lifebook
- Copies of all court orders
- Photographs
- Resource guide

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2. Which one is the lie?

A. In an emergency when placement cannot be located, the CPS worker should take the foster child to his/her home.

- B. Foster children are required to be seen face to face by their CPS worker a minimum of twice a month with one of those visits being in the placement.
- C. The FSP (family service plan) should be used as a means to facilitate the return of the child to the caregiver from whom they were removed.

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Foster Home Licensure

According to Olivia Y: All foster homes and facilities with children placed who are in the custody of MDCPS shall be timely licensed and subject to the licensure process approved by Public Catalyst on December 31, 2016.

Regular or Expedited Licensure?

A regular (unrelated) foster home must be fully licensed in order to accept a child.

The licensure process starts for expedited placements on the day that the child is placed in the relative's home.

Screening

- Applicants must be:
 - At least twenty one years old
 - Able to demonstrate that household income exceeds expenses
 - Housing no more than four children
 - Married or single (no co-habituating)
 - Not a substantiated perpetrator in MACWIS
 - A legal Mississippi resident
 - Willing to work with the agency toward the permanent plan
 - Able to communicate effectively with any child placed in the home



Licensure Process

- Orientation
- Background
 Checks/Criminal History
- Home Study
- Training
- Final Licensure

WARNING!

No child should ever remain in a placement without completed background/criminal history checks on all household members age fourteen and over.



Time Limits

A written final decision must be given to the applicant:

- One hundred and twenty (120) calendar days of the initial intake for Non-relative Foster Homes.
- Ninety (90) calendar days of the date that the child was placed in the home for Expedited Relative Foster Homes

Placement Limits

- Foster homes are not permitted to care for more than five children, including foster, biological, and adoptive children at any given time.
- No more than two children in the foster home may be under the age of two or have therapeutic needs, including biological and/or adoptive children.

EXCEPTIONS! EXCEPTIONS! EXCEPTIONS!

Prudent and Reasonable Parenting The standard of "careful and sensible parenting" is expected of any relative or non-relative foster parent. The licensed foster parent must communicate decisions made on the child's behalf with their worker but the expectation is that the foster parent will make decisions for children in care as they would for their own children.

Foster Home Re-Evaluation

- The full re-evaluation process must take place every two years with the following requirements due every year:
 - The home environment checklist, and
 - Verification of ongoing training hours



Policy Violations and Adverse Actions

The licensure specialist must consider each case individually, but hay recommend that the home be closed for the following easons:

- At the family's request
- The family moves out of state
- The family refuses to cooperate with the policies of MDCPS
- The family moves in household members without notifying the agency
- Failure to complete a Corrective Action Plan
- The family no longer meets licensure requirements
- A substantiated report of child maltreatment
- The family fails to take children after two placement requests
- The family has had no child in their home for at least six consecutive months

Unlicensed Foster Homes

- No child shall remain in a foster home or facility that cannot meet MDCPS licensure standards.
 - If a court orders a child into a specific unlicensed placement that cannot meet MDCPS licensing standards, the worker must inform the court and explain the reasons as well as notify the court of other licensed options for placement.
 - MDCPS employees are prohibited from asking a Court to place a child in any unlicensed placement that cannot be licensed.
 - Should the Court order the child to remain in the unlicensed home, the worker will provide a copy of the Court order to the Licensure unit for filing.



What is the only American sport where the defense has the ball?

What are they defending?







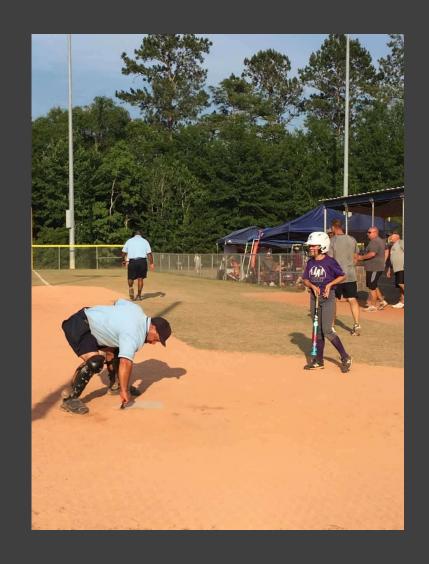
Home is the point of departure and return.

Runners who leave home are trying to get back...

They may stay at other bases, standing on them temporarily for safety, but the goal is always to get home safely. What is it called when an inning ends and a player is left on base?



Home plate is cleaned frequently. No other base gets such respect.



"In the game of baseball,
Home is rugged, fixed into the earth,
trod upon, but precious.

Home is an altar.

It is protected.

It is defended.



Home plate represents the sacred amidst the profane."



Symbolically and mechanically, baseball is a game about coming home.







